

# Toowoomba Children's Contact Centre

## Guidelines for Supervised Contact and Changeovers

Children's Contact Services provide a child-centred model of intervention that assists children of separated parents to establish and maintain a relationship with the parent they don't live with and other family members.

Children's Contact Services are independent and are NOT bound to provide a service, even if expressly ordered by a Court.

The services provided by the TCCC are designed to reflect our vision of providing a service where all children feel valued as individuals and are able to develop and maintain supportive and nurturing relationships with their family. This vision includes a safe working environment for staff. Service will be withdrawn from clients who cannot, or will not, work with this Service to enable this vision.

These services are offered by the Toowoomba Children's Contact Centre on the basis of the following conditions, to be observed by all parties involved.

The primary client of the service is the child/ren and these visits must always be focussed on the children's interests. We encourage all parents to familiarise themselves and attend the Centre for an orientation visit with their children with the Centre prior to the first visit.

Staff at this Centre understand that parents are often unhappy with the Court Orders or Parenting Agreements they have. If you are unhappy with the Orders you have received, please address this with someone who can assist you. Your legal representative or mediator may be the best person to get advice from. Our staff cannot assist you with legal advice nor should they be the object of your frustration if you have Orders or Agreements that do not meet your needs.

**This Service cannot meet the needs of all parents and children. At times the service will decline or withdraw services if it is believed that we cannot provide an environment that is safe for children, parents and staff or if we cannot meet the needs and expectations of a parent.**

## Our Centre – 228 Ruthven Street, North Toowoomba

We are located at 228 Ruthven Street, North Toowoomba. We have separate car parking and entrances to our building so parents do not come into contact with each other while attending our Centre. Each parent is allocated a car park and entrance during the intake process.



## Contact Details and Opening Hours Staff

**Telephone:** 4638 0035 **Email:** [admin@tccc.org.au](mailto:admin@tccc.org.au) **Website:** [www.tccc.org.au](http://www.tccc.org.au)

**Monday** 9am – 5pm, **Tuesday – Thursday** 9am – 7pm, **Friday** 9am – 5pm, **Saturday** 8am – 5pm,

**Sunday** 9am -5pm

## Staff

Our staff have professional qualifications in a variety of areas including, Psychology, Social Work, Nursing, Teaching and Human Services, as well as decades of experience in this field. We all maintain current First Aid certification and do training in areas such as Child Protection, Domestic and Family Violence and Suicide Prevention. We are available to support parents and children who attend our Centre and will offer referrals if we can't help you. Please be aware though, that our staff **DO NOT PROVIDE LEGAL ADVICE OF ANY KIND** and if your enquiry relates to a legal matter, we will always refer your legal practitioner or other legal service if you do not have one.

We do not engage volunteers at this Centre. We do however support University students who do their placements at our Centre. When students attend our Centre they will have a name badge on, identifying that they are a student. They are also under the supervision of staff at all times. Parents are able to elect not to have a student attend their visit at any time.

## Our Intake Process

We recognise that appropriate intake procedures are important to ensure a successful relationship between the Service and the clients who wish to access the service.

Intake interviews are essential to ensure parents understand how the service operates, under what conditions it is offered and what their rights and responsibilities are if they choose to use the services of the TCCC.

Intake interviews must be completed by both parents (separately) and are usually done by telephone. We can do them in person if requested and we encourage parents to bring a support person with them if this is helpful. We can also access a translation service for those parents where English is not their first language.

Prior to the intake process, parents will be provided with these Guidelines and our Fee structure. Parents will be asked to provide a copy of their Parenting Agreement / Court Order and any other relevant documents. During the intake staff will review the Centre Guidelines and conduct a Risk Assessment, review Court Orders and Agreements and collect information from parents with regard to their availability.

Once both parents complete the intake process they will receive a case plan outlining how the Service will be provided as well as other things parents have agreed to, for example if additional people have been approved to attend, whether gifts will be accepted and who will provide for the children's needs during the visit.

**This Service cannot meet the needs of all parents and children. At times the service will decline or withdraw services if it is believed that we cannot provide an environment that is safe for children, parents and staff or if we cannot meet the needs and expectations of a parent.**

## How we prioritise visits – Supervised contact only

Due to the high demand on our Centre we provide our services on the following basis. We prioritise families with a Court Order, and then those with a Parenting Agreement in place that allows for the progression to unsupervised contact.

Where parents do not have a Court Order or Parenting Agreement in place, three months of supervised contact will be offered to allow parents time to seek mediation or legal advice. After three months a review will be done and further contact will be offered if one of the following has occurred:

- A Parenting Agreement is in place with a clear progression to time outside of TCCC.
- Supervised time is ordered by a Court
- An application to Court has been made and awaiting a court date.
- Registration with a mediation service has occurred and awaiting a mediation date.
- Both parents have come to an agreement with regards to the progression of contact.

It is expected that both parents will make a genuine effort to come to an agreement that allows progression of contact and move towards self-managed agreements and co-parenting arrangements (where this is appropriate and safe to do so).

## What does Supervision look like

For most of our visits staff will be in close proximity to the parent and child being supervised at all times. By close proximity we mean close enough to monitor conversations. The **exception** to this is when GROUP supervision is provided, when ADDITIONAL PEOPLE attend or if a visit occurs OFFSITE.

**ALL other supervised visits.** Staff will be in close proximity to the parent and child being supervised at all times. It is our intention that we are close enough to monitor conversations between a parent and child and our staff will intervene when required.

When staff intervene, this may make parents feel uncomfortable at times; our staff are still required to do this if they feel it's necessary.

In particular the following guidelines are important to understand:

Parents need to speak at a volume that a supervisor can hear what is being said, this means no whispering to children and encouraging children not to whisper to you.

Not asking children inappropriate questions about the other parent, or their private life, bringing up Court matters, discussing where children may live in the future or pre-empting anticipated changes in contact arrangements.

Engaging in any conversations that a child appears uncomfortable or unwilling to participate in.

We acknowledge that at times it may be difficult to hear every conversation that occurs. Some of the reasons may be that a person has a quiet voice, a child may speak softly, other children in the family may be talking with the supervisor or additional people have been approved to attend visits. At all times staff will be monitoring the conversations as closely as possible. If a situation occurs that make this difficult our notes will reflect this, for example they may state "conversations inaudible for a brief period due to ....".

However even if this occurs, our staff will still be monitoring the body language, facial expressions and general demeanour of the child and would still intervene, if they thought if necessary even if they did not hear directly what was said.

While at our centre for a supervised visit, all children and adults attending a visit must remain in the same area. For example, one child can't be playing outside and the other inside or a grandparent can't be playing with one child outside while a parent is with another child inside. While children don't have to play together or with the same activity, all family members, or additional people attending a visit must be in the same area, inside or outside.

Sometimes staff are required to intervene in conversations. For example the topic may be inappropriate, the child may appear uncomfortable or on occasions a child may initiate a topic that staff need to support the parent to redirect. Sometimes these are minor occurrences and sometimes they are more difficult. Unless staff feel it's necessary, for example, highly inappropriate conversations or questioning by the visiting parent, staff will not note specific details of all conversations throughout a visit but will make a reference to the occurrence. Staff will however note specific details of inappropriate conversations or anything that requires notification to the Department of Child Safety.

**GROUP supervision** is in place where there are no known risk factors, where there is no Parenting Agreement or Court Order in place and both parents have agreed to this. During these visits the physical safety of the child will be the main purpose of the visit. Even during GROUP supervised visits, a staff member will be observing the visit at all times but will not be monitoring conversations closely. This type of visit may also be suitable for families who are moving on from a fully supervised arrangement to unsupervised visits and would be helpful for staff to monitor how the parent and child engage without close monitoring or support. Staff will still be available for support if necessary.

**Offsite visits** are currently under review and may be offered in the future. When considering offsite visits, we will review why the visit is being supervised and whether it is appropriate to occur offsite. For example these visits would only be considered for families where risk factors are low and where a written Agreement is in place or a Court Order in place allowing these to occur. Locations need to be public, for example parks, bowling, movies etc and of interest to the child as well as age appropriate. A staff member will not necessarily be able to monitor all conversations during offsite visits, for example if a parent and child are on play equipment in a park. Parents and legal representatives need to consider this when they agree to offsite visits. Regardless of Agreements or Orders in place, offsite visits remain at the discretion of TCCC staff who may refuse to facilitate this request if it is believed that they cannot provide a service where the visit can be appropriately supervised or is safe for a child or our staff.

**Additional people attending.** Parents need to be aware when they approve additional people to attend and there is more than one child being supervised, staff cannot monitor all conversations in these circumstances. If there is only one child being supervised then the staff member will stay with that child and can monitor conversations, even if several adults are in attendance. However if there is more than one child and several adults, a staff member will not necessarily be able to monitor all conversations and will prioritise the parent being supervised. Parents and legal representatives need to consider this when they approve additional people to attend.

Please note that there are restrictions around additional people attending visits and there needs to be a written agreement or Court Order in place for a request to be considered. Additional people attending remain at the discretion of staff and are dependent on the reasons for supervision. Our staff need to be confident that we can maintain an appropriate and safe level of supervision. The availability of space at the Centre is also a factor on whether an additional person can attend a visit.



## Nappy changes and Toileting – Supervised contact only

If a child needs assistance while toileting or needs a nappy changed, it is the visiting parents responsibility to do this. Our staff do not provide this service and where it is not appropriate for a visiting parent to do this, you may need to seek alternative supervision arrangements.

For all other circumstances the following procedure is in place for the toileting of children.

Only the visiting adult is to toilet/ nappy change the child. NO other adult is permitted in the toileting area.

Our toilet has what can be described as a barn door arrangement. The bottom part of the door remains closed at all times; to protect the child's privacy and the top part of the door remains open so staff can monitor the parent assisting the child or changing the nappy and continue to monitor conversations. For clarity, our staff are approximately 1metre/ 1.5 metres away and do not directly observe the child but rather the actions of the parent.

If a parent raises a notifiable concern about the child, the staff will note this and advise the parent to notify the Department of Child Safety. At no time will a parent be permitted to take photos of the child in this location. An example of what we would not consider notifiable would be if a parent advised of nappy rash. We would however note this if raised by the parent.

If a staff member has any concerns about a child during this time or any other time during a visit, they will notify the Department of Child Safety. A concern may be because of something a staff member observes or something a child discloses. Children will not be questioned by a staff member but our notes will accurately reflect what was said or observed to raise a notifiable concern.

## Behaviour

The Contact Centre reserves the right to refuse services and withdraw services to persons who are:

- affected, or believed to be affected, by alcohol or drugs.
- displaying violent or threatening behaviour.
- breaching centre guidelines
- make unrealistic demands on staff or continually try to involve staff in negotiations or arrangements with the other parent. Unrealistic demands may include excessive, unnecessary communication or constantly being included in emails that do not concern our Service as determined by our management team.

Parents whose behaviour is threatening, intimidating or abusive to staff or any other person at our Centre, will have their **service withdrawn**. At this time, all legal representatives will be advised of the circumstances of the withdrawal.

If a child's behaviour is threatening or intimidating toward other children or any other person at our Centre, or a child's behaviour disrupts other visits at our Centre or damages Centre property the Service will be withdrawn.

Parents are required to encourage and support their child when attending this Centre and understand that it is the role of the staff to encourage, support and facilitate the contact. If a parent will not do this or support staff to do this, the service will be withdrawn. A parent may be asked to organise someone else to drop off children at contact time where staff determine that a parent's behaviour impacts negatively on the children or staff during the changeover time. It is important to be aware that our notes reflect what occurs during this time as well as what occurs during the visit.

## **Visit Bookings and Cancellations – Supervised contact only**

Parents are expected to be on time when attending contact visits. If you are running late or unable to attend a contact visit you are required to advise staff at this Centre prior to the commencement time of your visit.

In the event that you do not notify this office that you are running late the visit may be cancelled. Where parents are consistently late the following additional requirements may be implemented to ensure a child is not kept waiting and caused unnecessary distress:

- A parent may be required to be at the Centre 15 minutes prior the visit commencing, or the scheduled visit will be cancelled.
- A scheduled booking may be cancelled if a parent does not arrive at the Centre at the scheduled commencement time of the visit.
- The residential parent may be requested not to attend the Centre with the child until the visiting parent has arrived. In this case the visit will not be extended.

It is the responsibility of the parent cancelling the booking to notify the Centre AND the other parent if you are in communication.

We require a minimum of 2 hours' notice where possible for any cancellations.

When we are not provided with this notice, a cancellation fee of \$50.00 may be **charged to the parent who cancels the booking** or does not show up for the visit. Makeup bookings will not be offered in these circumstances.

In the event that you have an early booking and we are not open, please leave a message on our answering machine or send an email as soon as you are aware you are not attending.

### **When cancelling a booking:**

- Please provide as much notice as possible. If you are aware of an event coming up that will prevent you from attending a visit, please advise in advance.
- If you or your child are unwell, advise us as soon as you receive this information or a medical certificate

You can contact this office outside of hours using our phone message system or email. Staff will generally be able to access this early each day and make appropriate adjustments.

Where two consecutive visits are missed, future bookings will be reviewed and may be reduced in frequency, suspended or cancelled. Due to the high demand on this Service, we are unable to guarantee bookings where families are unable to commit to attending on a regular basis. Consideration will be given to the reasons the bookings are continually cancelled; documentary evidence will need to be provided.

If a parent does not show up for a contact visit and has not cancelled that visit, visits will be suspended until such time as the parent contacts the Centre to discuss the circumstances of their non-attendance and confirms their commitment to attending future contact visits. A second event of a parent not attending a booking without notice, will result in the Service being cancelled.

## Makeup bookings – Supervised contact only

Due to the high demand on this Service makeup bookings will generally only be offered on weekdays or school holidays. Makeup bookings on a weekend can only be offered if a cancellation occurs and this must be within a two-week period.

## Dietary Restrictions and Health Conditions

It is important that we are updated about any medical conditions a child may have so we can keep them safe while at our Centre.

Visiting parents are welcome to bring food for a visit and this may include homemade food, take away food or having food delivered to our Centre. It may also include birthday cakes or other special occasion food.

With regard to dietary restrictions, our staff can only enforce restrictions that are related to a medical condition. The residential parent must provide a medical certificate or letter from a medical practitioner outlining what the condition is and what we need to do to keep your child safe while at our Centre. We would expect in these circumstances that the visiting parent has also been advised of this.

With regard to any health conditions a child may have, please provide us with their safety plan if one is in place.

## Electronic Equipment - Supervised contact only

**Mobile phones/Tablets:** Mobile phone and tablet/laptop use throughout visits is discouraged and required to be kept to very brief periods of time and not be used for playing games and watching movies. They may, for example be used to take photos (where children have consented), showing children photos or brief appropriate videos. Our expectation is that during visits parents will engage their children in a variety of ways and not use devices to keep their children occupied or entertained.

The use of devices during supervised visits must be kept to a minimum and remains at the discretion of staff at all times.

**Telephone calls/ Video calls:** Telephone/video calls involving children are not permitted at any time during a contact visit unless it is a scheduled, prearranged call that has been agreed to by both parents.

For a scheduled telephone/video call to occur, we require this to be included in a Parenting Agreement or Court Order, for example it may state, “*calls between child and grandparent/ sibling etc are permitted to occur during a supervised contact visit*” or the parent the child lives with provides consent in writing for this to occur. Phone calls including video calls and must be on speaker at all times so staff can monitor conversations.

**Photographs:** Photographs are permitted at this Centre under the following conditions.

All photographs taken at the Centre are to be supervised by the Family Support Worker supervising the visit. Photos need to be appropriate and not of an evidence gathering nature.

Under no circumstances are any other children, parents or staff attending the Centre to be included in any photographs. Staff may ask a parent to delete a photo if they believe it may include a staff member or other child or family attending our Centre.

If children express that they don't want their photo taken, staff will always support this request.

Staff can take the occasional photo for a parent during a visit if asked. However, they will not take photos continuously or on demand and will decline if requested to do so.

**Recording equipment:** The use of video cameras or any other recording device including mobile phones IS NOT PERMITTED in any area of this Centre. **Staff do not consent to being recorded at any time.**

If a parent records staff, children, or anyone else at our Centre visits will be cancelled.

## Case notes

Parents are only able to access our notes via a subpoena. Our staff will review the limits to confidentiality with you during your intake. Factual records will be kept of each visit, with dates and times, who attended and any information that staff believe is relevant.

**For SUPERVISED VISITS** it may include, but is not limited to, some or all of the following:

- Separation from the residential parent and what that parent does to support and encourage their child.
- Interactions between the children and the parent they are visiting and siblings.
- The level of discipline, supervision and support required by staff.
- The type of communication style used by parents. For example, is it age appropriate, positive, encouraging and how each parent responds if the child brings up the other.
- How the child separates from the visiting parent and what that parent does to support the transition.
- Conversations that staff believe are relevant.
- Anything that staff observe or hear that would require a notification to the Department of Child Safety.

Our staff don't record the following :

- Requests from the visiting parents that staff deem not relevant.
- Details of all conversations during a visit unless it is a notifiable event, or topics raised either by the parent or child deemed inappropriate and need to be redirected by staff.

Client files will also contain other contact between our Centre staff and parents and may include the following:

- Emails, phone conversations, cancellations, in person information, medical certificates (if provided) and other correspondence.

They won't include the following:

- Records of general conversation unless related to service provision.
- Emails that confirm weekly bookings

**For CHANGEOVERS** it may include, but is not limited to, some or all of the following:

- The date and time of the changeover
- Information about a changeover that does not occur, for example who cancelled the changeover/ what reasons were provided.
- Information about any incidents that occur
- Information about who picks a child up if it's not the parent
- And any other information staff deem relevant to service provision.



## Confidentiality and the limits to confidentiality

All information recorded on the Centre's file and all other information relating to the client and their children is kept confidential within the Centre. We only collect information that is absolutely necessary and do not collect or keep client addresses on our file. **There are however limitations on client confidentiality.** It is important that you are aware of these limitations.

The specific limits to client confidentiality are:

1. Where there is suspicion of child abuse. Where there is a Separate Representative or Case Worker appointed by the Department of Child Safety or another person appointed by the Department of Child Safety. This may take the form of written or verbal information.
2. Where a subpoena has been issued by a Court.
3. Upon a joint written request being received from the parties and/or their legal representatives, or the Independent Children's lawyer we will release our notes if it is for the purposes of mediation, court event, family report interviews. *Notes will be provided to the person conducting the mediation, court event or family interview and not directly to parents.*

*While we are happy for notes to be reviewed with parents, they are provided to the above people on the basis that copies are not provided to parents. This is to ensure that your information is kept as safe as possible. Unfortunately we do see information inappropriately placed on social media sites and information provided inappropriately to third parties and we ask that all parties respect our conditions.*

4. Where there is a court appointed Independent Children's Lawyer (ICL) or another person appointed by the ICL for example a Family Report Writer. This may take the form of written or verbal information.

*This means the Independent Children's Lawyer may request information about your attendance at our Centre and that we may provide them with copies of case notes or other information requested. It also means that we may contact the ICL if we have concerns about a family. It may also include Family Report Writers appointed by the Court.*

5. Where a client discloses their intent to harm themselves or someone else. In this case the person considered at risk of harm and the appropriate authorities will be notified.
6. Parents whose behaviour is threatening, intimidating or abusive to staff or any other person at our Centre will have their service withdrawn and the appropriate authorities will be advised.
7. In the event that services are withdrawn, suspended or likely to be so, the following people, if appointed will be advised:
  - a) Independent Children's Lawyer
  - b) Separate Representative
  - c) Case Worker appointed by the Department of Communities
  - d) Depending on the circumstances staff may also advise the legal representative of either party.

**This is an irrevocable authority permitting the Centre to release information to any one or more of the above-mentioned cases.**

## Collection of children from our Centre – Supervised contact

If a residential parent is unable to collect a child from a visit, they are required to phone or email our Centre and advise who they are sending to pick their child up. If they provide this information by phone, they may also be requested to confirm this information by email. They must ensure the nominated person has identification with them on arrival at our Centre.

## Collection of children from our Centre – Changeovers

Parents are required to be available to pick up their children at our Centre unless the following arrangements have been made.

If a parent is unable to pick up their child and a third party is named in a Court Order or Parenting Agreement **OR** both parents have previously nominated a third party, the following will occur.

- If the person picking up the child is unknown to staff, they will be required to produce identification on arrival.
- The parent dropping off the child will be notified who has arrived to pick up the child and unless they object, the changeover will occur.

If a parent is unable to pick up their child and wishes to organise someone else to pick up their child for a changeover, and this person is **NOT** nominated in a Court Order or Parenting Agreement or both parents have NOT previously nominated a third party, the following is required.

The parent who cannot attend the changeover to pick up the child will:

- Notify the other parent that this will occur prior to the scheduled changeover, seek agreement from that parent.
- Notify the TCCC by email that this has been organised and agreed to, prior to the scheduled changeover.
- Ensure the person picking up the children can produce identification on arrival if they are unknown to staff.

It will then be confirmed at the changeover with the other parent, who has arrived to pick up the child.

If you send someone in your place to pick up your child and the above arrangements are not in place, or the person presenting to pick up the child cannot produce ID, the parent the child arrives with will be required to make a determination as to whether the changeover will take place.

Even if you've been with our Centre for a while, we may sometimes ask to see your ID. This can happen if a staff member doesn't recognise you. We do this to help keep all children safe, and we appreciate your patience and understanding.

## Communication

Our staff are not responsible for communicating information between parents unless it relates directly to contact centre services. If parents have limited communication or are not legally represented, we recommend that a communication book or a Parenting App is used to ensure that all necessary and appropriate information is provided.

The type of information we will communicate is for example:

- If we have been advised of a food allergy or relevant health concern.
- If a parent is running late and has notified the Centre.
- If a parent has to cancel a contact visit, we will confirm in writing to both parents the cancellation has occurred.
- If a child has been unwell but is well enough to attend the visit or for example a child is teething and this is impacting them.

The type of information we won't communicate:

- Any demands from either parent to the other.
- Passing on that a child has head lice, unclean clothes, or if a child's behaviour is difficult to manage and expecting staff to address this with the other parent or pass on their helpful suggestions.
- Making disrespectful comments or suggestions about how the other parent can improve or things they should do and asking that these are passed on to the other parent. *These will however be noted on file.*

### Supervised Contact Visits

To minimise miscommunication with regard to contact bookings the following procedure is in place.

- Confirmation emails are sent during the week prior to each visit occurring and parents are required to confirm if they are attending.
- If you are not attending, advise us by return email as soon as possible. **Ensure that you note if the other parent has already been advised and if you are agreeable to staff providing the reason for the cancellation.**
- If a booking is cancelled, it will be recorded on file and we will confirm by email to both parents, that this has occurred and who cancelled the booking. The reason for the cancellation will be included if consent has been given to provide this. If consent to provide the reason has not been given, it will still be recorded on file but not provided. **We understand that this may be frustrating however our staff cannot provide this information without consent.**
- Medical certificates are not required by this Centre, however if provided we will keep them on file. **Please ensure that when providing a medical certificate you also note if it can be provided to the other parent.**

### Excessive communication

On occasions we have experienced excessive and inappropriate communication from parents. This is unacceptable and we do not have the available resources to respond to this. Please do not include us in emails between you and the other parent, be respectful of the role staff have and do not try to involve us in your situation unless it directly involves our Centre.

We understand that attending a Contact Centre can be stressful for families and on occasions miscommunications may occur. However, being aggressive, rude and disrespectful toward our staff will not assist in resolving issues and may result in the service being withdrawn.

## Carparking Information

To help keep everyone safe and reduce the chance of unexpected contact between parents, there are parking arrangements in place for visits to the Centre. While we can manage what happens on-site, **we can't control what occurs outside the Centre**—such as meeting at traffic lights, intersections, while travelling home or while parked at locations away from our Centre.

If you believe that the other parent has breached a Court Order, we recommend that you speak with your legal representative. If you believe a Domestic Violence Order has been breached, please contact the police for assistance.

We understand that these arrangements may not work perfectly for everyone, but our ability to enforce guidelines is limited to what happens at the Centre itself.

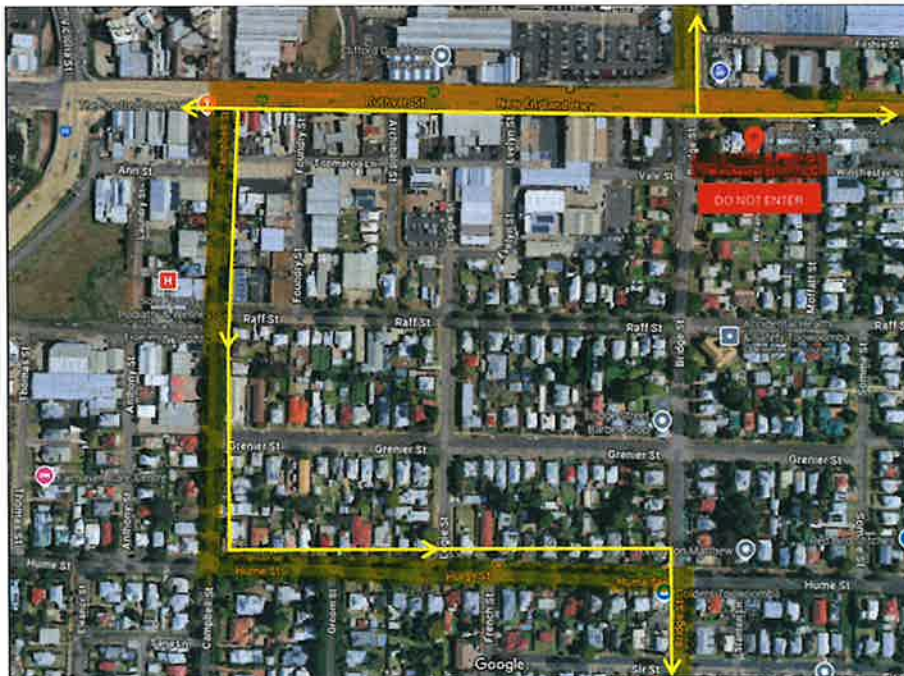
### Parking on Ruthven Street

If you're arriving via Ruthven Street, we encourage you to use our driveway for parking. Some parents also choose to park across the road and use the pedestrian crossing to walk over. Please *avoid* parking on Bridge Street, as the other parent may be parking or exiting from that area. Also, we ask that you do not drive around the back of the building on Winchester Street.

If you're unsure where to go, please call our office—we're happy to help you navigate the best entry and parking options.

When we first moved into this building, Ruthven Street had more parking available. However, the council later installed a bike lane and removed many of those spaces. We did raise our concerns, as did many of our clients, but unfortunately the decision was not changed.

As a result, parking is limited, but you are welcome to use our driveway—even if that means temporarily double-parking. As visits involve quick drop-offs and pick-ups, any wait time should be minimal. Your patience is greatly appreciated.





## Parking on Winchester Street

If you're using the Winchester Street entrance, please enter and exit via Bridge Street to avoid passing the front of the building. For those coming from the Highfields direction, please turn left at Moffat Street and approach Winchester Street from that side. You can also leave via this route. This helps reduce the chance of crossing paths with the other parent.

You are welcome to use our car park or park in the surrounding area on Winchester Street—but please avoid Ruthven Street and *do not* park in the private car park on the corner near the mower shop.



If you are unsure about where to go, feel free to contact our office and a staff member will be happy to assist.

### Important Reminder

Driving past the other parent's designated entrance is a breach of our Centre's Guidelines. If this occurs and is observed by staff, it will be recorded on file and may result in the withdrawal of services.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and respectful environment for all families.

## DATA COLLECTION

The Data Exchange is a secure, online IT system that is hosted by the Australian Government Community Grants Hub, Department of Social Services.

This streamlined performance reporting system was introduced to help funded organisation spend less time and effort on administration and increase their focus on delivering better outcomes for you, your family and your community.

### Personal information

Funded organisations may opt to use the Data Exchange as a free electronic case management system, in order to manage your details and keep track of the services they are providing you, to ensure that they are meeting your needs.

Where organisation use the Data Exchange to manage the services they offer, they will enter your personal information onto the Data Exchange system where it will be securely stored.

This information includes your name, age, gender, cultural background and disabilities you provide to the organisation. The privacy of this personal information is protected by law, including by the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988*.

Only the organisation you are working with will be able to access information identifying who you are, when the Data Exchange is used as a Client Management System. Each organisation is expected to have internal policies to protect your records.

Information collected through the Data Exchange is de-identified and used for research and policy analysis only. The Data Exchange is interested in trends at the program and whole-of-program level, not individual clients.

You and any family members who come with you to receive services will never be identified in any reports or publications produced from the Data Exchange, including reports or publications.

### Your consent is required

Funded organisations reporting through the Data Exchange will ask if you consent to the collection of your personal information for storage in the Data Exchange.

No personal information will be stored in the Data Exchange if you do not consent. Your consent is completely voluntary. You can change your mind at any time. This will not stop your access to services.

### Further information

You can ask the organisation working with you about the storage and handling of your personal information. You can also find more information about the handling of personal information in the Data Exchange privacy policy on [dex.dss.gov.au](http://dex.dss.gov.au).



## **HEALTH PROTOCOLS Supervised bookings and Changeovers**

The health and safety of our families and staff are our top priority and as such there are some additional conditions in place regarding attendance at this Centre for supervised contact visits. We are guided by the QLD Health Time Out guidelines in use by schools and daycare centres with regards to exclusion periods. We reserve the right to cancel bookings based on the following criteria.

1. Children or parents that are unwell cannot attend this Centre. If a child or parent arrives at our Centre unwell the visit will be cancelled immediately.
2. If a parent or child arrives at our Centre with a temperature above 37.5 degrees, the booking will be cancelled.
3. Where a child has contracted something that is deemed contagious, the scheduled booking will also be cancelled for the sibling group.
4. Where an adult attending a supervised visit has contracted something that is deemed contagious, the scheduled booking will be cancelled.
5. There may be restrictions on areas of the building that can be used and available resources. Staff regularly clean and sanitize different rooms in the Centre throughout each day and toys are regularly cleaned. Therefore, at different times throughout each day you may not be able to enter some areas of the building or use some resources until this has been completed.

We understand that it is disappointing if a visit is cancelled due to illness. However, it is not reasonable to expect that a visit will go ahead if there is a risk to other families or our staff and we reserve the right to cancel bookings.

## FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT POLICY

This policy outlines the handling and management of feedback and complaints at the Toowoomba Children's Contact Centre. The TCCC supports the rights of consumers to complain about service provision or individual staff members and will endeavour to manage complaints in an open, fair and predictable way.

The TCCC **will not respond** to feedback that is provided in an offensive, harassing, or malicious manner.

The TCCC acknowledges the right of clients to remain anonymous when providing feedback and making a complaint, however this may limit the action that it can take in responding to and investigating feedback and complaints.

### PRINCIPLES

1. Encourage clients to provide feedback on service provision
2. Allow the opportunity to provide feedback with anonymity, if required
3. Provide appropriate methods/channels for client feedback, including people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds
4. Monitor feedback and respond appropriately, modifying service design and/or procedures where necessary
5. Manage complaints in an open and fair way, reflecting the principles of natural justice

### Responding to Feedback, including Complaints

The TCCC reviews the feedback and complaints we receive as part of monitoring and improving our service.

- If a positive comment or suggestion is made it will be considered in how we do things in the future.
- If feedback is critical or a complaint is made, the client will be contacted, and attempts will be made to resolve the matter.

### Receiving Feedback, including Complaints

Feedback and complaints may be received in the following ways:

1. Speaking directly with a staff member
2. Speaking directly with the manager
3. Using email at [admin@tccc.org.au](mailto:admin@tccc.org.au)
4. Using feedback forms located in waiting areas
5. Write a letter to the Management Committee, PO Box 186, TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350 or at TCCC- Management Committe@tccc.org.au

### Managing Feedback and Complaints

Formal complaints will be responded to in the following manner:

1. Acknowledge receipt of complaint within 10 days if a response has been requested. If no response is required, record complaint in Grievance Register and provide complaint to Management Committee for review.

2. If a response has been requested, the centre manager to investigate the issues raised and decide on the action required. Client to be advised of outcome within two weeks.
  - Where the complaint is not resolved to the client's satisfaction it will be referred to the Management Committee
3. A management committee representative will contact the individual within 4 weeks with the outcome of the investigation or if required a revised timeframe.

#### Reviewing Complaints

If an individual is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may seek to have the outcome mediated by an external service either:

The Department of Justice and Attorney General – Dispute Resolution Centre

Telephone number 1800 017 288

Email: [drc.sq@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.sq@justice.qld.gov.au)

OR

Client may recommend an appropriately qualified service of their choice to be considered by the management committee.

# FEES

## Intake fee:

- \$40.00 per parent  
This is a one-off fee, payable by each parent and is nonrefundable once the intake has been completed.

## Changeover fees

- \$30.00 per parent per month  
This fee covers all changeovers that occur during the month and is only payable if the service is used. For example, if there is a month where no changeovers occur, no fees are payable.

## Supervision fees

### Weekdays

- \$30.00 per hour/ \$25.00 per hour concession

### Weekends

### Saturday

- \$35.00 per hour/ \$30.00 per hour concession

### Sunday

- \$40.00 per hour/ \$35.00 per hour concession

*Fees are due on or before the day of contact and can be paid by EFTPOS or Direct Debit. We do not accept cash payments.*

*Where fees fall into arrears your booking schedule will go under review and bookings may be reduced.*

## Cancellation fees – Supervised contact only

- \$50.00 per visit - where less than two hours' notice is given or a parent does not attend a visit.

This fee will be charged to the parent who cancels the booking or does not show up for the visit (regardless of who is normally responsible for the fees). Makeup bookings will not be offered in these circumstances and the cancellation fee needs to be paid prior to further bookings.

Fees for this Service are split between parents unless there is a Court Order, Parenting Agreement or written agreement in place noting who is responsible for fees.

Staff cannot negotiate this on your behalf. Until we are provided with a written agreement, fees will be split. If there is a disagreement with regard to fees, please address this with your legal representative.